

RESPONSE BY AMBASSADOR JOSEPH VERNER
 REED UPON RECEIPT OF THE MEDAL FOR DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2012 THE LINKS CLUB
 NEW YORK CITY

I am greatly honored to receive this "Award for Distinguished Achievement" from the Society.

I love France. I have great admiration and affection for the People of France.

My spouse of more than fifty years is the daughter of a lady of France.

We have lived in Grasse and enjoyed numerous visits to every part of this noble nation.

My Father was born in Nice at the Hotel Negresco. He lived with his parents in the Loire until a teenager. He later lived in Paris and Senlis.

I was honored to receive the Legion of Honor from President Mitterrand when I served as Chief of Protocol of the White House under President Bush Senior. As Chief of Protocol I organized more visits between President Bush and President Mitterrand than Mr. Bush had with any other Head of State.

In my youth I had the privilege of having a Governess from France.

Soon after the close of World War Two I had the pleasure of being with a French Family for a Summer near the City of Tours. That started my love affair with "La Belle France".

It was France that turned the American quest for Independence into a reality.

France's legendary culture has spread her elegant language (the language of Diplomacy) across the globe with 73 French speaking nations forming the Francophonie.

France shapes global tastes.

Everyone's second country is France.

I have worked at the United Nations for thirty years. France is a powerhouse at the Parliament of Man being a Permanent Member of the Security Council.

France is at the peak of success with her Couture, Painting, Music, Film, Drama, Cuisine, Wines from Bordeaux and Burgundy, Champagne (who wouldn't love a country with 640 types of cheese?).

My mind turns to -

The City of Lights, the Statue of Liberty, La Cote D'Azur, Versailles, the Tricolor, Normandy and the bluffs of the beaches of Utah and Omaha, Talleyrand, Le Musee D'Orsay, Napoleon, La Marseilles, Chartres, The Chateaux of the Valley of the Loire, President Wilson, General De Gaulle, General Eisenhower, Françoise Mitterrand.

President Wildenstein and friends, thank you, thank you, thank you for bestowing on me this great honor. I am touched, humbled and proud.

Encore, Bon Soir

Bon Thanksgiving and Dieu Vous Benisse.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING RENO TUUFULI AND ASHLIE BLAKE

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize two exceptionally talented young people from my home State of Nevada, Ashlie Blake and Reno Tuufuli. These two young athletes were selected to represent the United States as members of the U.S.A. Track and Field World Youth Team, and competed in the International Association of Athletics Federations—

IAAF, World Youth Championships in Donetsk, Ukraine. These dedicated and hardworking young Nevadans competed with great skill against the best young athletes in the world, and they represented their State and their Nation admirably at the competition.

Ashlie Blake and Reno Tuufuli helped lead Team USA to its best showing at the World Youth Championships. The team took home 17 medals over the course of the competition, more than any other country. Ashlie placed third out of 55 athletes from around the world, winning the U.S.A.'s first medal of the competition for her performance in the women's shot put event. Reno surpassed his personal best record in the men's discus throw and placed seventh out of 30 international athletes in the men's discus competition.

There is no doubt that both of these outstanding performances were the result of many hours of hard work and dedicated training, and Ashlie and Reno should be proud of their efforts and achievements. I congratulate Ashlie Blake and Reno Tuufuli on their success, and I wish them all the best as they continue their athletic endeavors.●

REMEMBERING GORDON BELCOURT

• Mr. TESTER. Madam President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Gordon Belcourt, the executive director of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council. Gordon passed away on July 15 in Billings, MT.

Gordon was a tremendous leader and advocate for Indian Country. A trusted and experienced voice, Gordon could always be counted on to use common sense to get to the heart of the issue and find a solution. He leaves big shoes to fill, and he will be missed by all Montanans. Sharla's and my heart goes out to all of Gordon's friends and family who are mourning his loss.

Gordon grew up on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and graduated from Browning High School. He attended the University of Santa Clara in California, where he participated in the ROTC Program, before becoming a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He earned a master's degree in public health from the University of California at Berkeley and returned to the Big Sky State to attend law school at the University of Montana. He also served as president of the Blackfeet Community College. Gordon, who was honored by the State of California and the University of California Berkeley as a Public Health Hero, received an honorary doctorate from the University of Montana for his work to improve Native American health.

Gordon built the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council from the ground up, serving as executive director beginning in 1998. He gave the council a powerful voice—both throughout the region and across the Nation. He

worked tirelessly to improve life in Indian Country through infrastructure projects, the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Healthcare Improvement Act, and the creation of the Tribal Law and Order Act. He also created the regional Tribal Institutional Review Board for the protection of the rights of Native Americans.

Gordon was a courageous leader on issues of alcoholism and suicide in Indian Country. Due to Gordon's leadership, the Tribal Leaders Council received \$5 million in 2009 to combat alcohol abuse among American Indians. His extensive knowledge of the issues facing the community and his commitment to doing what was right made him an outstanding advocate for Native Americans.

As we bid farewell to Gordon, we recognize that he was a true warrior for Indian Country. His given Blackfeet name, Mixed Iron Boy, was in remembrance of the combat his uncle endured in World War II, and it will serve as a reminder to all of us of Gordon's remarkable strength, unwavering courage, enduring compassion, boundless vitality, and lasting legacy.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Gordon's widow, Cheryl, and all of his family and many friends.●

ROSHOLT, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Rosholt, SD. Founded in 1913, Rosholt will celebrate its 100th anniversary this year.

Located in Roberts County, Rosholt possesses a strong sense of community that makes South Dakota an outstanding place to live and work. Julius Rosholt presented the plan of the town site next to the proposed railroad. The town of Rosholt was built and born on the economy of agriculture beginning with the first lots sold on August 11, 1913. Rosholt has continued to be a strong reflection of South Dakota's greatest values and traditions. The community of Rosholt has much to be proud of and I am confident that Rosholt's success will continue well into the future.

Rosholt will commemorate the centennial anniversary of its founding with celebrations held from August 13-18 featuring a centennial play, fireworks, 3K run, alumni reunion, and a kiddie parade. I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Rosholt on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

NEW EFFINGTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize New Effington, SD. Founded in 1913, New Effington will celebrate its 100th anniversary this year.

Located in Roberts County, New Effington possesses a strong sense of community that makes South Dakota an outstanding place to live and work. New Effington was named after Effie